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Executive Registry

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22 August 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director for Administration
Deputy Director for Intelligence
Deputy Director for Operations
Deputy Director for Science and Technology
Director, Public Affairs Office
Director, Office of Legislative Liaison
Director, Office of Medical Services

FROM: Executive Secretary

SUBJECT: Backgrounder on Soviet Chemical Tracking

Attached you will find State's guidance for handling questions that are expected to come up with regard to Soviet use of chemical tracking substances.

Attachment:
State cable 259127, dtd 22 Aug 85



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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 6440
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BT
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E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: UR,US
SUBJECT BACKGROUNDER ON SOVIET CHEMICAL TRACKING

THERE FOLLOWS BACKGROUND BRIEFING ON SOVIET TRACKING
CHEMICALS GIVEN IN THE DEPARTMENT ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21.

Q CAN YOU SAY WITHOUT QUALIFICATION THAT THE UNITED
STATES DOES NOT USE CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES IN TRACKING OTHER
PEOPLE?

SENIOR DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL: OTHER DIPLOMATS?

Q UH-HUH.

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A. NO. WE DO NOT.

Q HOW LONG HAVE WE KNOWN ABOUT THIS; HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN TACKING IT; HOW DOES IT GET ON THE PEOPLE, ET CETERA? JUST A FEW EASY QUESTIONS.

A. I.E., ALL THE QUESTIONS THAT I HAVE. ALRIGHT, LET ME START WITH WHAT EXACTLY IS A TRACKING AGENT. THE KGB HAS AT TIMES USED CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES ON OUR PERSONNEL IN MOSCOW AND ELSEWHERE TO TRACK THEM AND THE PEOPLE WITH

WHOM THEY COME IN CONTACT.

CHEMICALS USED DO NOT APPEAR IN NATURE AND CAN THEREFORE BE TRACED EFFECTIVELY. THE SUBSTANCES IN QUESTION, WHICH HAVE BEEN APPLIED, AS I SAID IN THE STATEMENT INDIRECTLY TO EMBASSY PERSONNEL, LEAVE DEPOSITS ON THE PERSON OR POSSESSIONS OF PEOPLE WITH WHOM THEY'VE HAD CONTACT.

NOW, IF I MIGHT DESCEND JUST A MOMENT MORE INTO LAYMEN'S TERMS, WHAT I MEAN BY "INDIRECTLY" IS THAT THE SUBSTANCE, THE TRACKING AGENT, COULD BE PLACED ANYWHERE -- ON YOUR CAR SEAT, STEERING WHEEL, DOORKNOBS. I MEAN, LITERALLY ANYWHERE. AS I DESCRIBED IT, IT'S A POWDERY AGENT.

THE EMBASSY EMPLOYEE COMES IN CONTACT WITH IT. IT'S A VERY PERSISTENT AGENT SO THAT IT DOESN'T DISAPPEAR FROM WHEREVER HE HAPPENS TO HAVE TOUCHED IT. HE THEN, IN THEORY, TRANSFERS THIS SUBSTANCE TO ANYTHING HE MAY COME IN CONTACT WITH, BE THEY PEOPLE OR --

Q DOES HE HAVE TO TOUCH THEM?

A. WELL, IT HAS TO BE TRANSFERRED. THE AGENT IS AN AGENT. IT HAS TO BE TRANSFERRED FROM WHEREVER IT IS ON HIS PERSON TO THE OBJECT OR THE PERSON, AND THEREFORE IT ALLOWS THE KGB THEN TO DETERMINE WHO MAY HAVE HAD CONTACT WITH EMBASSY AGENTS.

Q HOW IS IT DETECTED.

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Q BY WHAT MEANS?

A BY "WHAT MEANS" MEANS WHAT?

Q HOW DO YOU TRACK IT? HOW DO YOU TELL -- ELECTRONIC OR OTHERWISE?

A THAT'S ONE OF THE OPERATIONAL DETAILS THAT I REALLY CAN'T GO INTO. BUT YOU HAVE TO RUN, IN ESSENCE, A CHEMICAL TEST IN ORDER TO DETERMINE THE PRESENCE OF THE AGENT. BUT IT IS DETECTABLE IN VERY, VERY MINUTE QUANTITIES AND IS PERSISTENT AND THEREFORE THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT USEFUL FOR THIS FORM OF ENDEAVOR.

Q IF YOU GOT IT ON YOUR HANDS, DOES IT NOT WASH OFF WITH ONE WASHING, DO YOU KNOW?

A I WON'T GET INTO THOSE KIND OF DETAILS, BUT IT IS

PERSISTENT. AND AS YOU'RE GOING TO SEE THROUGHOUT, WE ARE NOW STARTING A MORE DETAILED INVESTIGATORY PROCESS WHICH WILL HOPEFULLY SHED LIGHT ON SOME OF THESE KINDS OF QUESTIONS.

Q HOW LONG HAS THIS BEEN GOING ON?

Q DID IT APPEAR INSIDE THE EMBASSY OR ONLY OUTSIDE?

A THE ANSWER IS, IT APPEARED ON OUR PEOPLE; AND OUR PEOPLE MOVE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE.

Q HOW DID YOU FIRST FIND --

A I REALLY HAVE NOTHING FURTHER AS TO WHERE. AS I SAID, I GAVE YOU SOME EXAMPLES. I THINK THAT'S AS FAR AS I CAN GO.

Q HOW DID YOU FIRST FIND OUT ABOUT IT?

A I MIGHT GO TO THIS GENERAL QUESTION OF THE TIMING. AS

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I'VE SAID, TRACKING CHEMICALS HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED ON OCCASION BY THE KGB FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS. ONLY LAST YEAR, HOWEVER, DID LABORATORY TESTS REVEAL THAT THE SUBSTANCES USED MIGHT BE HARMFUL. AT THAT TIME IT WAS NOT BELIEVED THAT THE USE OF THE SUBSTANCES WAS SUFFICIENTLY SYSTEMATIC OR FREQUENT TO POSE A HEALTH HAZARD TO U.S. PERSONNEL.

HOWEVER, OVER THE COURSE OF THIS SPRING AND SUMMER, THERE IS NOW EVIDENCE THAT THE KGB PROGRAM IS MORE WIDESPREAD THAN WE HAD THOUGHT.

AGAIN, TO GIVE YOU A BIT MORE DETAIL, WE'VE KNOWN OF THE GENERAL USE OR EXISTENCE OF SUCH SORTS OF CHEMICAL TRACKING AGENCIES SINCE THE 1970'S. THEIR USE, HOWEVER, WAS VERY SPORADIC, INFREQUENT, TO THE BEST THAT WE COULD DETERMINE. IN FACT, WE BELIEVED THAT THE SOVIETS HAD TERMINATED USING SUCH AGENTS EVEN IN THESE LIMITED AMOUNTS THAT WE HAD DETECTED IN 1982.

WE SIMPLY DID NOT DETECT ANY USE BETWEEN 1982 AND THE RESURGENCE OF MORE WIDESPREAD APPEARANCES IN THE SPRING AND SUMMER OF THIS YEAR.

Q ANY EVIDENCE THAT THEY'RE USING --

Q (INAUDIBLE) ANYTIME, WHEN YOU FOUND OUT IN THE 1970'S THIS IS THE CASE?

A OF COURSE, AT THAT POINT THERE WAS NO REASON FOR ANY WARNINGS. THE SUBSTANCES, AS I SAID, WERE VERY SPORADIC, MINUTE. THERE WAS NO INDICATION AT ALL THAT THERE WAS ANY USE OF A SCALE, AND THE PEOPLE WHO WERE EXPERTS IN THIS WILL TELL YOU THAT, I THINK, EXPOSURE IS ONE OF THE KEY WORDS HERE. THAT THE EXPOSURE PART OF THE EQUATION IN DETERMINING WHETHER THERE IS RISK OR NOT WAS IN ANY WAY SIGNIFICANT, AND THEREFORE THE ISSUE WAS NOT RAISED.

Q BUT WHEN WERE THEY FIRST ALERTED TO THIS?

A AS I SAID IN OUR STATEMENT, OUR EMBASSY PERSONNEL HAVE

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BEEN BRIEFED THIS MORNING. THERE ARE OTHER BRIEFINGS FOR OTHER MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY AND DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY.

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT -- WE'VE BEEN WORKING ON THIS PARTICULAR CASE NOW, THE EVIDENCE HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION AND BASED ON OUR SAMPLING IN THE SPRING AND SUMMER, IT'S A MATTER OF THE LAST FEW WEEKS ONLY.

Q COULD WE HAVE A DEFINITION OF THE WORD "PERSISTENCE." THAT CAN BE USED TWO WAYS. DOES IT MEAN IT'S PERSISTENT ON THE SKIN, OR DOES IT ENTER THE BLOODSTREAM?

A IN FACT -- AND I WON'T GO INTO A LOT OF DETAIL SINCE I'M NOT TOTALLY QUALIFIED; NOT HARDLY QUALIFIED. BUT IN ANY CASE, MOST NORMALLY IT WOULD BE EXTERNAL, DERMAL. IT'S CONCEIVABLE THAT IT COULD BE INGESTED OR INHALED, ALTHOUGH THAT'S APPARENTLY, AT THIS STAGE, CONSIDERED TO BE A LESSER POTENTIAL PROBLEM.

Q IN OTHER WORDS, IT GOES THROUGH THE SKIN TO THE BLOODSTREAM?

A PROBABLY NOT. AND, IN ANY CASE, EVEN IT DOES GO THROUGH THE SKIN, THE PRELIMINARY EVIDENCE WOULD BE THAT IT WOULD BE METABOLIZED IN SUCH A WAY THAT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO IT INSIDE THE BODY WOULD NOT BE DANGEROUS.

BUT I STRESS ONCE AGAIN THAT ALL THIS IS PRELIMINARY, THAT WE'RE NOW STARTING A PROCESS -- WE'RE BACK TO A PROCESS AGAIN, MARVIN -- OF INVESTIGATION THAT THIS WILL TAKE SOME TIME. I'M TOLD BY THE EXPERTS THAT TO MAKE A THOROUGH ANIMAL STUDY OF THE KIND THAT'S REQUIRED, TO HAVE DEFINITIVE RESULTS, IS NORMALLY A QUESTION OF YEARS. NOW, OBVIOUSLY, WE'RE GOING TO SPEED THAT PROCESS UP TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE AND TRY TO HAVE SOME

PRELIMINARY RESULTS WELL BEFORE THAT.

I JUST WANT TO EMPHASIZE ONCE AGAIN THAT THIS IS THE NATURE OF THE SITUATION AS WE SEE IT.

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Q DO YOU SEE THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT BRINGING MASSIVE EMIGRES OF U.S. EMBASSY PERSONNEL TO SOME HOSPITALS IN EUROPE FOR CHECKS ON THEM AND EXAMS THAT YOU ARE NOW UNDERTAKING, OR POSSIBLY REPLACING ALL OF THE STAFF AND BRINGING IT TO THE UNITED STATES AND PUTTING A NEW STAFF THERE?

A NO. AT THIS POINT, WE'RE BRIEFING THE EMBASSY PERSONNEL, OF COURSE, SO THAT THEY'LL BE WELL AWARE OF WHAT THE PROBLEM IS AS IT'S BEEN UNCOVERED, BUT THAT WE DON'T HAVE, AS THE STATEMENT SAID, ANY REPORTS OF ILLNESS OCCURRING FROM THESE NOR IS THERE ANY REASON, FOR EXAMPLE, FOR PEOPLE TO BE REMOVED FROM MOSCOW AT THIS POINT.

Q YOU TALKED ABOUT EMBASSY PERSONNEL. IS THERE ANY INDICATION THAT OTHER AMERICANS WORKING IN MOSCOW, WHETHER THEY BE JOURNALISTS OR BUSINESSMEN OR OTHER FOREIGN DIPLOMATS, FOR THAT MATTER, HAVE ALSO BEEN EXPOSED TO THIS?

A OUR PRESUMPTION IS THAT THEY MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN, AND THAT'S WHY THE EMBASSY WILL BE BRIEFING NOT JUST THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY BUT JOURNALISTS, AMERICAN RESIDENTS, OTHER FOREIGN DIPLOMATS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN TARGETED AS WELL.

Q INCLUDING JOURNALISTS? YOU PRESUME THAT JOURNALISTS HAVE ALSO BEEN TRACKED THIS WAY?

A WE CAN'T EXCLUDE IT. IT'S CERTAINLY A POSSIBILITY, AND THEREFORE THAT'S WHAT WE'RE PURSUING.

Q THERE'S A PRESUMPTION HERE THAT SOMEBODY HAD TO PUT THIS SUBSTANCE IN PLACES WHERE EMBASSY PERSONNEL COULD GET AT IT SO THAT MOST OF THE EMBASSY PERSONNEL IS IN THE EMBASSY. SO IS ONE TO ASSUME THAT THE KGB WAS ABLE TO GET INTO THE EMBASSY AND SPRINKLE THIS STUFF AROUND?

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A: I DON'T THINK THAT NECESSARILY FOLLOWS. THE EXAMPLES I GAVE YOU, FOR EXAMPLE, OF PICKING IT UP OFF YOUR CAR SEAT, FOR EXAMPLE, OR OFF OF -- ANY KIND OF AN OBJECT THAT YOU MIGHT ROUTINELY COME IN CONTACT WITH COULD BE THE VEHICLE BY WHICH IT PASSED TO YOU.

Q: YOUR TELEPHONE?

A: I SUPPOSE. WHY NOT? YOU CAN'T ELIMINATE ANYTHING GIVEN THE NATURE OF THE BEAST.

Q: IN ORDER FOR A TRACKING AGENT TO BE EFFECTIVE, ONE WOULD THINK THAT IT WOULD HAVE TO BE EASILY DETECTABLE, NOT THROUGH LABORATORY PROCESSES. IN OTHER WORDS, THE SOVIETS WOULD BE ABLE TO SEE IT THROUGH INFRA-RED, THROUGH SOME SORT OF EASILY DETECTABLE METHOD. IS IT NOT EASILY DETECTABLE THROUGH SOME SORT OF VERY PORTABLE --

A: WELL, YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT TAKING THE EQUIPMENT TO THE SPECIMEN. I SAID IT'S PERSISTENT. THEREFORE, IT'S POSSIBLE TO TAKE THE SPECIMEN TO THE EQUIPMENT, IF YOU WILL. DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT?

Q: NO.

Q: THE POINT IS, IF YOU GOT SOME OF THIS STUFF ON YOU AND THE KGB IS TRACKING YOU, HOW DOES THE KGB KNOW WHERE YOU'VE BEEN? PRESUMABLY, THEY'RE NOT GOING TO SIT AROUND FOR TWO MONTHS WAITING FOR LABORATORY ANALYSIS.

A: NO, NO. THEY CAN DO THE ANALYSIS VERY RAPIDLY. I'M NOT SAYING THAT IT'S NECESSARILY A DIFFICULT PROCESS, AND --

Q: DO YOU KNOW, IN FACT, HOW THEY DO THIS?

A: THEY DO IT VERY RAPIDLY, AND THAT'S SPECULATION. I'M ONLY SAYING THAT IT'S NOT THAT ELABORATE A PROCESS. IT'S NOT TO KNOW WHERE YOU GOT IT, BUT THE FACT THAT YOU HAVE IT.

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Q DO YOU KNOW HOW THE SOVIETS USE THIS TO TRACK IN TERMS OF FINDING OUT WHERE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN?

A I REALLY CAN'T COMMENT ON ANY OPERATIONAL ASPECTS OF THIS CASE.

Q I DIDN'T ASK YOU HOW. I ASKED IF YOU KNEW?

A ONCE AGAIN, TO TELL YOU IF WE KNEW OR DID NOT KNOW WOULD BE AN OPERATIONAL QUESTION.

Q IF THIS ENDED IN 1982, HOW DID WE DETECT THE RESURGENCE THIS SPRING AND SUMMER? WERE WE TESTING FOR IT IN THE

INTERIM?

A WE ROUTINELY RUN ALL KINDS OF TESTS FOR VARIOUS KINDS OF ACTIVITIES WHICH MAY BE MOUNTED AGAINST US. THIS WAS ONE ACTIVITY WHICH HAD BEEN KNOWN IN THE PAST AND

THEREFORE PEOPLE CONTINUED TO BE AWARE OF, AND IT SIMPLY STARTED SHOWING UP AGAIN; AND THEN A PATTERN DEVELOPED THAT THIS WAS NOT THE SORT OF SPORADIC USE THAT WE HAD SEEN IN THE PAST BUT RATHER MORE WIDESPREAD.

Q DID IT COVER ALL THE CATEGORIES OF EMBASSY PERSONNEL?

A ALL I'M PREPARED TO SAY AT THIS POINT IS THAT SOME EMBASSY EMPLOYEES DID OBVIOUSLY COME IN CONTACT WITH IT. THE EXTENT OF EXPOSURE IN THE EMBASSY IS EXACTLY THE REASON WE PLAN TO SEND THIS NIH/EPA TEAM OUT TO MOSCOW. THAT'S THE MAJOR PURPOSE OF THEIR VISIT, IS TO LOOK AT THIS QUESTION OF EXPOSURE AND THAT WE REALLY WON'T HAVE A FEEL FOR UNTIL SOME TIME HAS PASSED.

Q IS THE ONLY CONCERN THE HEALTH OR IS THERE A POLITICAL CONCERN OF USING THIS SORT OF THING TO TRACK DIPLOMATS, WHETHER IT HURTS THEM OR NOT?

A WELL, OUR POLITICAL CONCERN, OF COURSE, IS THAT THIS HAS BEEN DONE. THIS IS NOT A PROBLEM WE CREATED. IT'S

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SOMETHING THAT'S BEEN DONE TO US.

WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIETS CONSCIOUSLY SOUGHT TO IMPAIR THE HEALTH OF OUR EMPLOYEES, BUT THAT DOES NOT ABSOLVE THEM IN ANY WAY FOR THEIR RESPONSIBILITY FOR USING CHEMICALS OF ANY KIND AGAINST OUR PEOPLE. THAT'S TOTALLY INAPPROPRIATE, POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ACTION BY THE KGB, AND THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP THERE IS ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHATEVER ACTIONS -- SECURITY SERVICES, OR ANYONE -- AND WE DEMAND THAT THEY STOP IMMEDIATELY.

Q WOULD THERE BE A PROTEST EVEN IF THIS STUFF IS FOUND TO BE PERFECTLY HARMLESS?

A EXACTLY.

Q THERE WOULD BE?

A YES.

Q WHEN WAS THE PROTEST MADE THAT YOU REFERRED TO IN YOUR STATEMENT? YOU SAID THE UNITED STATES HAS PROTESTED IN

ITS STRONGEST TERMS; WHEN WAS THAT?

A THE PROTESTS WERE MADE THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY.

Q HERE IN WASHINGTON AND IN MOSCOW?

A WASHINGTON AND IN MOSCOW.

Q COULD I ASK A FOLLOW-UP TO MY QUESTION? IF THAT IS THE CASE, IF THE PROTEST WOULD HAVE BEEN MADE REGARDLESS, WHY WASN'T IT MADE TEN YEARS AGO?

A ONLY BECAUSE THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM IN THOSE DAYS. TO REPEAT ONCE AGAIN, IT'S REALLY SO LIMITED AND SO SPORADIC AS TO HAVE BEEN OF A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT MAGNITUDE.

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IN ADDITION, THE TESTING, AS I MENTIONED, THAT WAS DONE ON SOME OF THESE COMPOUNDS -- AND IN PARTICULAR, I SHOULD SAY THE TESTING WAS DONE ON NPPD, WHICH IS ONE OF THE COMPOUNDS -- WAS DONE LAST YEAR. AND IT'S AT THAT TIME THAT THE TESTING SHOWED THAT IT WAS A MUTAGEN -- AND I CAN DESCRIBE IT MORE BRIEFLY THAT TEST, WHICH IS CALLED THE AMES TEST -- AND THEREFORE WHEN IT SHOWED UP AGAIN THIS TIME, WE THEREFORE HAD MUCH MORE SERIOUS CONCERN THAN WE WOULD HAVE HAD IN THE PAST.

Q BUT YOU KNEW THAT THE PEOPLE HAD BEEN EXPOSED TO THIS TEN YEARS AGO, THIS AGENT. AND IF YOU FOUND OUT LAST YEAR THAT IT HAD POTENTIALLY HARMFUL CONSEQUENCES, WHY WEREN'T PEOPLE INFORMED LAST YEAR?

A ONLY BECAUSE THE EXPOSURE LEVEL. THE INCIDENCE OF USE WAS SO LIMITED IN THOSE PREVIOUS YEARS THAT THERE WAS FRANKLY NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THERE WAS ANY KIND OF EXPOSURE THAT WOULD BE DANGEROUS.

Q IS YOUR PREPARATIONS FOR THIS BRIEFING INCLUDE A RECAP, BY ANY CHANCE, ON THE FAMOUS MICROWAVE?

A YES. AS YOU KNOW, WE HAVE ON OCCASION DETECTED MICROWAVE SIGNALS BEAMED AT THE EMBASSY AT MOSCOW. AS LATE AS 1983, WE PROTESTED STRONGLY TO THE SOVIETS ABOUT A BEAM WHICH OPERATED FOR A PERIOD OF SEVERAL MONTHS.

YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT A MAJOR STUDY ON THIS ISSUE BY THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY IN THE SEVENTIES CONCLUDED THAT THE LEVEL OF SIGNALS DID NOT PRESENT A HEALTH

HAZARD. WE HAVE TAKEN PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES IN THE

CHANCERY BUILDING, BUT WE BELIEVE THAT THE MICROWAVES, OR OTHER MEASURES DIRECTED AGAINST OUR PEOPLE, REMAIN STOPPED.

Q IS IT YOUR ASSUMPTION THAT THIS HAS ONLY BEEN USED IN THE SOVIET UNION? THEY DON'T USE IT IN WASHINGTON, FOR INSTANCE?

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A IN FACT, IT IS OUR PRESUMPTION THAT IT IS, OR COULD HAVE BEEN OR MAY HAVE BEEN USED ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD. THERE IS EVIDENCE OF ONE OCCASION OF USE IN THE UNITED STATES.

Q IN WASHINGTON?

A I WON'T SAY WHERE. BUT, IN ANY CASE, AS A GENERAL RULE, BECAUSE WE CAN'T EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF ITS USE, WE HAVE TO CONSIDER IT A POSSIBILITY, AND THEREFORE WE'RE INVESTIGATING IT ON THAT BASIS.

Q BUT SO FAR AS YOU KNOW, IS THE SOVIET UNION THE ONLY COUNTRY WHICH USES TRACKING AGENTS? DO WE USE THEM, OR DOES ANYBODY ELSE USE THEM?

A AS I SAID BEFORE, WE DO NOT USE CHEMICAL TRACKING AGENTS IN THE WAY THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN USING THEM. CONCERNING WHAT OTHER COUNTRIES DO, I CAN'T ANSWER THAT.

Q WHAT DO YOU MEAN "IN THE WAY?"

(INAUDIBLE).

A HERE, OBVIOUSLY, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT DIPLOMATS AS OPPOSED, FOR EXAMPLE, TO CRIMINALS.

Q IS NPPD THE MOST COMMON OF THE TRACKING AGENTS, AND IS THERE ANY INDICATION THAT ANY OTHER --

A BUT LET ME GO BACK TO THAT QUESTION. REGARDLESS OF WHAT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT, THIS SORT OF CHEMICAL-TRACKING AGENT, ET CETERA, IS NOT USED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. IF YOU ASK THE GENERIC QUESTION ABOUT TRACKING AGENTS, THEN THE ANSWER STILL, WITH DIPLOMATS, IS NO, BUT THAT'S THE EXTENT OF THE ANSWER.

Q ON NPPD, IS THAT THE MOST COMMON OF THE TRACKING AGENTS, AND IS THERE ANY INDICATION THAT THE OTHER AGENTS THAT ARE USED ARE ALSO CARCINOGENIC?

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A: WHETHER OR NOT IT'S THE MOST COMMON, WE CAN'T SAY. WE ARE DOING THE TEST, OR WILL BE DOING VERY SHORTLY THE TEST ON THE OTHER AGENTS.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR --

A: NOW, WHAT I HAVE TO SAY HERE IS THAT WHEN I SAID THESE AGENTS DO NOT EXIST IN NATURE, I MEAN, THEY DON'T. YOU CANNOT FIND THEM SITTING ON THE SHELF IN ANY CHEMIST'S LABORATORY. THEY HAVE TO BE SPECIFICALLY COMPOUNDED AND PRODUCED. TAKE THE FORMULA, YOU MAKE THE CHEMICAL.

IT'S JUST NOT A CHEMICAL THAT'S SITTING AROUND READILY AVAILABLE, AND THEREFORE ANALYZABLE. WE HAD TO ACTUALLY DETERMINE THE FORMULA AND CREATE IT AND ANALYZE IT.

Q: WHAT'S YOUR PRESUMPTION ON WHY THE RUSSIANS DID THIS?

A: WELL, I'M NOT SURE I CAN ANSWER THAT, REALLY, TO YOUR SATISFACTION, OTHER THAN TO SAY WHAT I SAID A MINUTE AGO, THAT WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT IT WAS CONSCIOUSLY TO IMPAIR THE HEALTH; THAT IT WAS, IF YOU WILL, THE KGB, ZEALOUS AS EVER, IN ATTEMPTING TO DO ITS JOB, AND THAT -- AND THEREFORE HAVE PLUNGED INTO THIS IN A RATHER UNFORTUNATE WAY.

Q: BUT TO DO THEIR JOB IN TERMS OF TRACKING U.S. DIPLOMATS OR IN TERMS OF TRACKING SOVIET PEOPLE WHO COME IN CONTACT WITH U.S. DIPLOMATS? WHAT?

A: WELL, I THINK THE ANSWER'S OBVIOUS, PROBABLY. IN TERMS OF TRACKING U.S. DIPLOMATS, IT'S -- YOU KNOW, IT'S WHERE YOU'VE BEEN THAT'S IMPORTANT TO THEM OR WITH WHOM YOU'VE HAD CONTACT. SO I THINK THE ANSWER IS THE SAME WHETHER -- IT'S JUST A QUESTION OF WHETHER YOU SAY YOU'RE TRACKING US OR YOU'RE TRACKING THE CONTACTS; THE NET RESULT IS THE SAME.

Q: A FOLLOW-UP ON THAT --

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Q YOUR CHRONOLOGY SUGGESTS THAT THEY REINTRODUCED THESE SUBSTANCES IMMEDIATELY AFTER GORBACHEV ASSUMED HIS

DUTIES. DO YOU ATTACH ANY SIGNIFICANCE TO THAT PARTICULAR SEQUENCE?

A NO. WE HAVE NO REASON TO DO SO. AS I SAY, WE REALLY CANNOT FIND A GOOD REASON FOR WHY IT SHOULD HAVE RESUMED WHEN IT DID, WHY WE SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST BEGAN TO DETECT ITS RESUMPTION WHEN WE DID.

Q DO YOU IN FACT KNOW, THROUGH WHATEVER CHANNELS, THAT THIS STUFF HAS BEEN USED AGAINST OTHER NATIONALITIES?

A NO. I DON'T HAVE ANY CONFIRMATION ON THAT.

Q WHAT'S THEIR RESPONSE FOR YOUR PROTEST? DID THEY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT, OR DID THEY DENY THAT?

A WE DON'T CHARACTERIZE OUR DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES. I CAN'T GO BEYOND THAT.

Q IS THIS THE SORT OF THING THAT YOU WOULD EXPECT THE SECRETARY TO TAKE UP WITH MR. SHEVARDNADZE WHEN THEY MEET?

A WE'VE RAISED BEFORE AND WILL NO DOUBT RAISE AGAIN THE SERIOUS DANGERS TO OUR RELATIONSHIP CAUSED BY ACTIONS OF SOVIET MILITARY AND SECURITY SERVICES. THIS IS A SERIOUS MATTER, AND WE'LL TREAT IT AS SUCH IN OUR MEETINGS.

Q CAN YOU SAY WHAT PART OF THE BODY OUR TESTS ARE PICKING UP THIS NPPD FROM?

A WELL, FIRST OF ALL, I'M NOT SURE THAT YOU SHOULD ASSUME THAT YOU NECESSARILY PICK IT UP FROM HUMANS. AS I SAID BEFORE, YOU MAY DETECT IT WHERE IT HAS BEEN DEPOSITED, WAITING FOR SOMEONE TO PICK IT UP. AND, AGAIN WITHOUT CLAIMING TO BE AN EXPERT ON THAT QUESTION, I WOULD SAY IT'S MORE LIKELY THAT IT'S THE LATTER RATHER THAN THE FORMER WHERE IT'S DETECTED.

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Q WE'RE NOT PICKING IT UP ON PEOPLE?

A I'M NOT SAYING WE'RE NOT. I'M ONLY SAYING THAT IT'S PROBABLY MORE LIKELY THAT IN DOING YOUR TESTS OF EQUIPMENT, POSSESSIONS, HOUSEHOLDS, THOSE KINDS OF THINGS, YOU'RE GOING TO PICK IT UP.

Q DID SHULTZ ALREADY RAISE THIS IN HELSINKI?

A DID HE ALREADY RAISE IT?

Q YEAH.

A OUR PROTEST WAS THIS WEEK.

Q I KNOW. I KNOW. BUT YOU --

A WE BECAME AWARE OF THIS --

Q COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO, YOU SAID.

A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO.

Q COULD I JUST FOLLOW UP, YOU SAY HERE THAT IT'S WHERE YOU'VE BEEN AND IT'S IMPORTANT WITH WHO YOU'VE HAD CONTACTS. HAS THE EMBASSY HAD ANY EVIDENCE THAT AS A RESULT OF THIS THAT PEOPLE THAT THEY'VE HAD CONTACTS WITH HAVE BEEN PICKED UP BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT?

A I FRANKLY CAN'T GIVE YOU ANY INFORMATION OF AN OPERATIONAL NATURE, AND THAT FALLS INTO THAT CATEGORY.

Q WHEN YOU SAID BEFORE -- YOU SAID BEFORE THAT YOU PRESUMED THAT IT MAY HAVE AFFECTED OTHERS OUTSIDE DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. IS THAT JUST A PRESUMPTION, OR DO YOU HAVE HARD EVIDENCE?

A TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE NOW, THAT'S A PRESUMPTION. BUT, ONCE AGAIN, I STRESS THAT'S WHY THE NIH/EPA TEAM IS GOING OUT THERE, TO LOOK AT EXACTLY THIS QUESTION OF EXPOSURE.

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Q IS THIS A CHEMICAL THAT WE'VE EVER SEEN BEFORE?

A NO. THAT WE'VE EVER SEEN?

Q YEAH.

A AS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

Q THAT'S RIGHT. DOES IT EXIST IN ANY -- FOR ANY PURPOSE WHATSOEVER BESIDES THE SOVIETS MAKING IT TO DO THIS JOB?

A I BELIEVE THAT YOUR LATTER CHARACTERIZATION IS CORRECT.

Q HOW MANY PEOPLE DO YOU THINK MAY HAVE BEEN EXPOSED?

A HOW MANY?

Q HOW MANY PEOPLE DO YOU THINK WERE EXPOSED?

A I HAVE NO ESTIMATE AT THIS POINT, AND THEN I WOULD HAVE TO REFER YOU ONCE AGAIN TO THE RESULTS OF THE TEAM WHICH GOES OUT.

Q SINCE YOU SAY THIS CAN'T BE ABSORBED AS A CARCINOGEN, ARE WE TALKING ABOUT SKIN CANCER?

A I'M NOT PREPARED TO ANSWER THAT. IN FACT, I'M NOT SAYING IT'S A CARCINOGEN YET. WE'RE SAYING THAT IT WAS TESTED TO BE A MUTAGEN, THAT MUTAGENS WHICH -- THAT CHEMICALS WHICH FAIL THIS TEST, I.E., ARE MUTAGENS, THERE IS A CORRELATION WITH BEING CARCINOGENIC IN HUMAN BEINGS.

Q BUT YOU SAID IT CANNOT BE ABSORBED INTO THE BLOODSTREAM. IT STAYS ON THE SKIN.

A I'M NOT SAYING -- I DID NOT SAY COULD NOT BE ABSORBED, AND I FRANKLY CAN'T ANSWER THAT QUESTION DIRECTLY.

Q IS THIS PURELY A RUSSIAN TECHNOLOGY? IT'S NOT

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SOMETHING THAT SOMEONE LIKE JAMES WALKER GAVE THEM?

(LAUGHTER)

Q: IS THERE AN EFFORT BEING MADE TO CLEAN THIS UP, AND HOW ARE WE GOING TO KNOW IF THE SOVIETS DO HEED OUR WARNING AND STOP DOING IT? I MEAN, IF THIS STUFF IS SO PERSISTENT.

A: WELL, WE HOPE THAT OUR DEMARCHE WHICH HAS BEEN EXTREMELY FORCEFUL, AS YOU CAN IMAGINE, WILL DO THE JOB, AND THAT THERE WILL BE NO FURTHER USE. CLEARLY, WE WILL CONTINUE TO BE ALERT TO IT, AND TO -- YOU KNOW, TO USE THE SAME KIND OF VIGILANCE THAT ALLOWED US TO PICK IT UP IN THE LAST --

Q: IT CAN'T BE ERADICATED? I MEAN, CAN YOU GET RID OF THE TRACES THAT ARE --

A: OVER TIME. AS I SAY, IT'S PERSISTENT, SO, I MEAN, WHO KNOWS THAT THERE MAY NOT BE SOME OBJECT OUT THERE SOMEWHERE THAT MAY STILL BE CONTAMINATED. I MEAN, THAT CLEARLY IS AN UNANSWERABLE QUESTION.

Q: I MAY HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD --

A: BUT WHEREVER WE FIND IT, WE'LL WIPE IT OFF, I GUESS.

(LAUGHTER)

Q: WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE TIMING HERE?

Q: COULD YOU GIVE US AN ASSESSMENT OF ANY DAMAGES IT CAUSED THE UNITED STATES ASIDE FROM HEALTH? NATIONAL SECURITY? IS THERE ANYTHING IMPORTANT WE HAVE LOST THIS

WAY? ANY SECRETS THAT WERE GIVEN OVER? I MEAN, DO WE KNOW ANY WAY THIS HAS --

A: I HAVE NOTHING FURTHER THAN WHAT I HAVE GIVEN YOU ALREADY ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS.

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Q OKAY. MY OTHER QUESTION IS, HOW DO WE TRACK SOVIET DIPLOMATS HERE?

A WELL, THAT'S AGAIN AN OPERATIONAL QUESTION. WE DO NOT DO IT IN THIS WAY.

Q BUT HOW DO WE DO IT? GIVE US SOME CHARACTERIZATION. THAT'S ONLY FAIR.

A NO. I'M SORRY. I'M NOT GOING TO GET INTO THAT QUESTION.

Q SINCE YOU ALMOST SAID THAT THIS HAS BEEN DISCOVERED BEFORE AND IT'S -- NOW YOU ARE COMING TO REVEAL THIS IN THIS WAY AND FILING THIS PROTEST. IS THE TIMING OF THE MEETING BETWEEN GORBACHEV AND PRESIDENT REAGAN HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS -- THAT YOU MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT NOW TO EMBARRASS THE RUSSIANS, OR THE MEETING BETWEEN MR. SHULTZ AND THIS RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER -- TO EMBARRASS THE RUSSIANS AGAIN?

A NO.

Q WHY DIDN'T YOU MAKE THIS BEFORE NOW WE ARE MAKING IT -- THE TIMING OF YOUR ANNOUNCEMENT. IS IT USED MASSIVELY IN THE EMBASSY NOW, OR WHATEVER IT IS USED?

A I THINK THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION IS CLEAR FROM WHAT I'VE SAID. IT'S ONLY WITHIN THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS THAT WE HAVE BECOME AWARE OF THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM. AS I SAID, THE EVIDENCE BEGAN TO ACCUMULATE IN THE SPRING AND INTO THE SUMMER.

WHEN WE BECAME AWARE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE EVIDENCE TO INDICATE THAT THERE COULD BE A POTENTIAL PROBLEM, OBVIOUSLY, WE TOOK A CLOSE LOOK AT IT. WE DECIDED IT WAS NECESSARY, CLEARLY, TO BRIEF -- TO BE CANDID WITH OUR EMPLOYEES IN MOSCOW AS WELL AS OTHER AMERICANS OR OTHERS WHO MAY HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO IT; AND,

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AT THE SAME TIME, SINCE WE WERE BRIEFING THEM THIS MORNING, THOUGHT THAT IT WAS BEST TO MAKE IT PUBLIC.

IT'S NOT OUR -- I DON'T WANT TO, IF YOU WILL, TO MINIMIZE

THE QUESTION. IT'S A VERY IMPORTANT ONE. BUT, NONETHELESS, WE DID THIS BRIEFING, WE PUBLICIZED IT BECAUSE WE WANT TO MAKE SURE IT'S PUT IN PERSPECTIVE. IT'S A SERIOUS PROBLEM. IT'S A PROBLEM, HOWEVER, AS I'VE DESCRIBED IT, AS THE STATEMENT DESCRIBED IT. IT'S A FACT, IT'S NOT A FANTASY. IT EXISTS, AND AS A CONSEQUENCE IT'S SOMETHING WE SIMPLY HAVE TO DEAL WITH REGARDLESS OF WHATEVER ELSE MAY BE ON THE AGENDA.

Q CAN YOU GIVE US ANY HELP AT ALL WITH THE NUMBERS HERE INVOLVED, WITHOUT BEING SPECIFIC ON THE NUMBERS? YOU SAID EARLIER THAT ONLY A FEW CASES OR SMALL NUMBER OF CASES IN THE PAST, THEN IN THE SPRING AND SUMMER A MUCH LARGER NUMBER OF CASES. ARE WE TALKING ABOUT, YOU KNOW, A FEW DOZENS BEFORE, HUNDREDS NOW? CAN YOU GIVE SOME CHARACTERIZATION TO GIVE US AN IDEA OF THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM?

A NO. ONLY THAT AS YOU'VE REPEATED IT, VERY SPORADIC AND INFREQUENT USE UNTIL THIS SPRING AND SUMMER WHEN THERE WAS EVIDENCE OF MUCH MORE WIDESPREAD USE. AND WHEN YOU SAY "CASES," I TRUST YOU'RE NOT REFERRING TO HUMAN BEINGS, BECAUSE, AS I SAID EARLIER, THERE'S NO ONE -- WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE OF ANYONE BEING ILL AT THIS TIME BECAUSE OF IT. SO THAT WHAT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT IS CASES OF DETECTION, IF YOU WILL, OR KNOWING ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF THE SUBSTANCES.

Q ARE YOU SUGGESTING THAT VIRTUALLY EVERYBODY IN THE EMBASSY HAS IN SOME WAY COME IN CONTACT WITH THIS?

A NOT AT ALL. I -- IN FACT, I HAVE TO GO BACK AGAIN TO THE FACT THAT THAT'S WHY THE TEAM IS GOING OUT. WE SIMPLY DON'T KNOW ENOUGH AT THIS TIME TO MAKE THAT JUDGMENT.

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Q HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE EMPLOYED IN THE EMBASSY, AND IN THE BRIEFINGS WHAT KIND OF NUMBERS ARE WE TALKING ABOUT, THE PEOPLE THAT ARE BEING BRIEFED, THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE?

A I'LL HAVE TO GET THAT INFORMATION FOR YOU. I DON'T KNOW. ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT THERE WERE A SERIES OF BRIEFINGS TODAY, STARTING WITH ALL ADULTS AND ADULT DEPENDENTS, AND NOT JUST OFFICERS.

Q AMERICAN DIPLOMATS?

A YEAH. FIRST THE EMBASSY COMMUNITY, AND THEN I'M NOT QUITE SURE HOW THEY WERE STRUCTURED, BUT THERE WERE A

SERIES OF BRIEFINGS THEN TO BRING IN OTHER AMERICANS ASSOCIATED WITH THE EMBASSY, I THINK, INCLUDING JOURNALISTS, AND THEN THERE WILL BE LIKEWISE BRIEFINGS --

Q IS THIS AT THE EMBASSY ITSELF?

A YES.

Q WILL THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT MAKE THE EVIDENCE AVAILABLE TO OTHER COUNTRIES WHO WILL ASK TO TRACK THIS POSSIBLE ABUSE AGAINST OTHER DIPLOMATS AND OTHER RESIDENTS, FOREIGN DIPLOMATS AND RESIDENTS OF OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE SOVIET UNION?

A I REALLY CAN'T COMMENT ON THAT INTELLIGENCE EXCHANGE QUESTION.

Q DID THE SOVIET UNION ACCEPT THE PROTEST?

A ACCEPT THE PROTEST?

Q THE PROTEST NOTE. YEAH. I MEAN, GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO REFUSE TO ACCEPT PROTEST NOTES. DID THEY ACCEPT IT?

A WELL, WHEN WE'RE TALKING ABOUT PROTESTS, YOU ASSUME

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IT'S A PIECE OF PAPER.

Q ARE YOU TELLING US IT'S NOT A PIECE OF PAPER?

A WELL, IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE, BUT, IN ANY CASE, THE
PROTEST WAS MADE.

Q VERBALLY?

A I HAVE NO FURTHER CHARACTERIZATION.

Q DOES THE AGENT GIVE A WIDE VARIETY OF MUTAGENICITY?
CAFFEINE, FOR EXAMPLE, TURNS OUT TO BE FAIRLY HIGHLY
MUTAGENIC ON THE AMES TEST. CAN YOU CHARACTERIZE THE
DEGREE OF MUTAGENICITY THAT YOU GET FROM THIS TEST ON
NPPD?

A I CAN'T, SIMPLY BECAUSE FOR THE MOMENT, YOU KNOW, THE
INFORMATION IS TOO TENTATIVE. WE DON'T WANT TO GIVE OUT
THE EXACT DETAILS. ONLY TO SAY THAT THE RESULTS WERE
SUFFICIENTLY IMPORTANT TO CONVINCE US THAT IT CERTAINLY
IS WORTH DOING THESE FURTHER STUDIES ON.

Q CAN YOU CHARACTERIZE THIS NPPD AS A POWDER OR AS A
LIQUID? DO YOU BELIEVE IT'S SPRAYED IN AS AN AEROSOL?

A I SAID IT'S A POWDERY SUBSTANCE.

Q IT'S A POWDERY SUBSTANCE. IS IT VISIBLE?

A UH --

Q TO THE NAKED EYE.

A IT CAN BE VISIBLE. THAT WOULD PROBABLY BE PRETTY POOR
TRADE CRAFT TECHNIQUE.

Q THAT'S WHAT I --

Q EXACTLY. (LAUGHTER)

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Q IS THE PRIMARY --

Q CAN YOU SAY WHETHER THE ONE CASE IN THE UNITED STATES WAS THIS -- IN THIS LAST WAVE THIS SPRING AND SUMMER, OR WAS IT SOME TIME AGO?

A I CAN'T ANSWER THAT QUESTION.

Q IS THE PRIMARY CONCERN THE FACT THAT --

Q CAN YOU SAY IF IT WAS DONE BY THE SOVIETS IN THE UNITED STATES OR BY SOME OTHER GROUP THAT MIGHT USE A SIMILAR TECHNIQUE?

A WELL, WHEN WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE USE OF THIS AGENT IN THIS PARTICULAR CASE, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE SAME PEOPLE.

Q IS THE PRIMARY CONCERN THAT THIS IS BEING USED AS AN INTELLIGENCE-GATHERING SORT OF ACTIVITY, OR IS IT THE HEALTH HAZARD, BECAUSE IT SOUNDS LIKE USED ON A SMALL SCALE THAT IT DOESN'T RAISE ANY ALARM OR DOESN'T PRESENT ANY RISK. IS IT THE HEALTH OF THE -- THE HEALTH FACTOR THAT IS OF PRIME CONCERN?

A MOST DEFINITELY. THAT'S THE REAL PROBLEM HERE. AS I SAY, WE HOPE THAT THE TEST WILL PROVE THAT THERE REALLY IS NO OR LITTLE RISK FROM THIS, BUT THAT IS NOT CERTAIN, AND THE FACT THAT SUCH AN AGENT HAS BEEN USED THAT HAS THESE CHARACTERISTICS IS WHAT MOST CONCERNS US. AND, AS I SAID EARLIER, WHETHER OR NOT IT TURNED OUT TO BE CARCINOGENIC OR NOT, THE FACT THAT CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES

SUCH AS THESE ARE BEING PLACED WHERE WE'RE EXPOSED TO IT IS OF GRAVE CONCERN.

Q WHEN I ASKED A VERY SIMILAR QUESTION TO THE LAST ONE, I THOUGHT YOU GAVE ME A CONSIDERABLY DIFFERENT ANSWER.

A IF WE GO ON LONG ENOUGH, YOU MAY GET SOME OTHER ANSWERS.

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(LAUGHTER)

Q IS IT JUST THE HEALTH ASPECT, OR IS THE ESPIONAGE ASPECT ALSO IMPORTANT? ARE WE CONCERNED ABOUT WHO THE KGB MAY BE PICKING UP AS A RESULT OF CONTACT WITH U.S. DIPLOMATS?

A I THINK IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT THAT WOULD CONCERN US. BUT WHAT DOES CONCERN US MOST OF ALL AND REGARDLESS

OF THE INTELLIGENCE IMPLICATIONS, WHICH I WOULD CALL OPERATIONAL, ARE THE HUMAN ASPECTS, AND THAT'S WHAT OUR PROTEST IS LODGED AGAINST MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE.

Q WHAT WAS THE LEVEL OF THE DIPLOMATS WHO WERE EXPOSED TO IT? DID THE AMBASSADOR -- WAS HE EXPOSED TO THIS CHEMICAL?

A I HAVE NO COMMENTS ON HOW MANY, WHO, OTHER THAN TO SAY THAT THAT'S WHAT THE TEAM IS GOING TO LOOK INTO.

Q THANK YOU. WHITEHEAD

END OF MESSAGE

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